

CHAPTER 3

THE COMMAND INFORMATION BUREAU

The assignment to a command information bureau (CIB) is one of the most difficult and demanding jobs the senior journalist encounters.

A CIB is the focal point of news media activities when there is great public interest in an event and many media representatives are expected to cover it. These events may be actual combat (Operation DESERT STORM), training exercises (REFORGER, BIG PINE) or serious incidents (Beirut bombing, Titan II and USS *Iowa* explosions). The CIB aids in creating a communication network that provides news media with easy access to the broadest possible spectrum of information about the role of the command in an event.

The CIB title is used when the event is Navy exclusive. However, when an exercise or incident involves two or more services, the CIB moniker is replaced with that of the joint information bureau (JIB). The topics discussed within this chapter apply to both CIBs and JIBs. However, for clarity, only the CIB name is used.

CIB PLANNING

Learning Objective: *Identify the advance steps in planning to establish a CIB.*

As a senior journalist, you must recognize as soon as possible when to set up a CIB for a particular event. The degree and quality of planning directly affect the success of the CIB operation. Planning is a critical first step that covers a wide array of areas, from a news briefing/conference time table to media credentialing, and establishing sub-CIBs when needed. When the PAO briefs the CO on the need for a CIB (and his approval is given), begin advance CIB planning immediately.

PA Regs lists six planning steps you should take to make sure the CIB serves the CO's information goals. These steps are as follows:

1. Develop a basic CIB establishment plan.

When a disaster or emergency situation hits your command, the time needed to organize a practical contingency response is at a premium. A solid CIB plan helps reduce the public affairs office response time while optimizing the use of personnel and resources.

This is especially important during the first hectic and confusing minutes of a disaster or emergency.

A special event (such as the commissioning or decommissioning of a ship or museum dedication) requires a CIB establishment plan that delineates the CIB arrangements and the methods of passing timely and complete information to the media.

2. Consider CIB establishment in all contingencies. A decision point on whether to start a CIB should be a part of your command's overall emergency action or contingency response plans. Regardless of the contingency at hand, the benchmarks you use to determine the CIB establishment are (1) the likelihood of many correspondents covering an event and (2) the chance of many correspondents crowding the public affairs office and interfering with normal business.

3. Start the CIB in advance. As the senior journalist, you have to manage personnel and equipment in an efficient manner to make sure the CIB plan is properly executed. One way to take the guesswork out of this is by establishing the CIB in advance of the operation, exercise or other high-interest event (save accidents and incidents). The CIB can be mobilized as much as 30 days in advance, giving you plenty of time to work out any glitches.

4. Provide standard operating procedures (SOPs). The CIB establishment plan should list SOPs understood by all members of the CIB team. The plan should cover the CIB configuration (and site selection, if known), location of news conferences, methods of serving media needs, ground rules, policies for receiving and answering press inquiries, and so forth. Specify CIB personnel assignments in a memorandum and distribute it to all public affairs staff members and other participants within the command. You may also post these assignments on the office Watch, Quarter and Station Bill.

5. Specify the CIB release authority. The commander who orders the establishment of the CIB must determine the individual authorized to release information to the news media and the public. The PAO is normally the officer in charge of the CIB and receives

this authorization. Specify release authority in the public affairs plan or other guidance directives.

6. Rehearse CIB activation and operation. Test the CIB plan periodically to determine its overall worth. You can check its effectiveness as part of your command's routine administrative inspection, using a developing scenario that simulates an accident or incident.

CIB ESTABLISHMENT PLAN

After advance CIB plans are in place, commit them to paper in the form of a directive. This is called the CIB establishment plan. The plan can be an appendix to the larger public affairs annex to the operations order. Appendices III and VI of this manual show examples of CIB establishment plans. (The CIB plan in Appendix VI is part of the decommissioning plan.)

The public affairs annex to the operations order is the mission task statement used to plan operations during an exercise or contingency operation. It outlines goals, attempts to solve (in advance) any public affairs problems that may arise and assigns definite responsibilities for accomplishing the work with detailed instructions for carrying it out. It follows the format used in the operation order and is signed by, and carries the authority of, the commander.

The CIB establishment plan outlines the purpose of the CIB—when and where it will be established and under what authority, its organization, commands to furnish personnel, planned movement of media representatives and observers (in general terms), communications, news conferences, briefings and news releases. It also specifies support requirements placed on other commands.

A good CIB establishment plan provides information needed for the mission without including material covered in regulations and manuals. It enables your office to be proactive rather than reactive and helps you control events, rather than have events control your operation.

Follow Guidance

Normally, the overall goal of the CIB is to fulfill the public affairs mission requirements already specified by the commander and higher authority. You can find this guidance in the following sources:

- *PA Regs*
- DoD directives

- Unified command (CINC) guidance
- Country team or embassy or host nation public affairs coordination
- Local command operations plan or order
- Public affairs annex of the next higher headquarters in the operational chain
- Commander's guidance

Determine Public Affairs Objectives

Once you determine the mission of the command, you must determine the public affairs objectives. You should find out what constraints will be imposed by higher headquarters, the embassy or the host government. Public affairs goals for a contingency plan or deployment of forces are often established at the national command authority level. Each intermediate level could amplify the goals as they filter down to your level.

Determine Procedures

You must decide what procedures you will use to operate the CIB. To do this, you should review what public affairs resources are available, determine if you need more, and if so, where and how you can get them. As stated before, determine who will have release authority and make it a matter of record in the command public affairs plan or other directive. You must determine the location of the CIB and what its responsibilities will be. You will need to decide how the media members will receive their information, and how often. You should also determine what internal information requirements exist.

TYPICAL CIB ORGANIZATION

Learning Objective: *Identify the organization of a typical CIB.*

No two Navy commands are the same with regard to structure, SOPs, personnel, and so forth. The same holds true for CIBs. Every CIB has its own unique organization and personnel mix, depending on the size, duration and news media interest in the exercise, operation or major event.

PA Regs offers a standard CIB organization from which to base your own. It is often formed under a senior PAO and includes three divisions: media relations, administrative support and liaison.

Media Relations Division

Headed by the media officer/chief, the media relations division accommodates both external and internal media representatives covering an event. This normally includes internal combat or audiovisual teams whose products are released to external or internal audiences. A media escort/briefing section, comprised of officers and senior petty officers with knowledge of the operation or the event and the needs of the various media representatives, is a key part of this division. Personnel assigned to the media relations division must be aware of the different coverage needs of each news medium in attendance. (Not recommended for nonrates; use public affairs-trained personnel only.)

Administrative Support Division

The administrative support division is headed by a local officer or senior petty officer who is familiar with the host base and local commands. This person is responsible for administrative and logistics support for the news media, including billeting, messing, transportation and communications arrangements.

Liaison Division

The liaison division provides direct liaison or briefing support when an operation or event involves more than one service (joint), an allied nation (combined), or when special expertise is required. For example, during an amphibious operation, CIB liaison officers may serve with the staff of Commander Amphibious Task Force when there is no full-time PAO available. The CIB liaison officer, in this case, would arrange for ship embarks, media tours of amphibious task force units, and so forth.

SUB-CIBs

A consideration during the planning period is the need and location of sub-CIBs. Normally, these will be in the major media outlet centers. For example, if an exercise is in the Caribbean, San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, would be logical sub-CIB locations. If the operation is afloat, the CIB may be with one task group and a sub-CIB with another. Sub-CIBs ashore handle the distribution of news received from the CIB in the operational area and help with local arrangements for reporters and observers.

CIB STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Learning Objective: Identify the developmental procedures and related concerns in operating a CIB.

As discussed earlier, the extent of planning directly relates to the success of the CIB. Consider every detail and note each one in the CIB establishment plan as SOPs. Although not all-inclusive, some areas to give serious consideration to include the following:

- Personnel requirements
- CIB site selection and configuration
- Media needs
- Media pooling
- Media ground rules

Personnel Requirements

When planning your CIB manning requirements, select the most professional public affairs staff members available. Request augmenters from neighboring commands or from reserve components to support your mission. During exercises, task subject matter experts from training units to brief media members about the weapons systems or equipment in use. Make plans to get drivers (be sure they can read maps), typing clerks and interpreters (if needed).

Your CIB staff members must be tactful when dealing with others, be capable of interpreting operational guidelines, be fluent in written and oral communication, be dedicated to getting information to news media in a timely manner and be willing to make an extra effort to complete sensitive tasks under pressure. Although you may not be fortunate enough to have people of this caliber, you want people who have initiative and can work with the reporters to help them get the unclassified information they need.

Some duties required of CIB personnel include the following:

- Providing news media with copies of stories, reports, fact sheets and photographs from the PAO
- Giving assistance in setting up news conferences and interviews
- Escorting news media to the event sites or related areas

- Maintaining the CIB for safety, health and comfort
- Getting additional information about the event that may or may not have news potential
- Assisting the news media as directed by the officer in charge of the CIB

CIB Site Selection and Configuration

Consider the following when selecting the location of the CIB:

- **Security and defense.** With the aid of the security officer, secure the facility so access is limited to media members and authorized military personnel. As appropriate, consider whether the facility can be adequately defended against enemy attack
- **Exterior.** Plan for a driver or escort outside the CIB assembly area. Be sure there is enough space for parking, to include any vehicles the civilian media may bring. If the CIB is inaccessible to vehicles driven by the civilian media, you may need to setup a staging area where the media can park and be picked up by military vehicles.

Select possible CIB sites early, preferably during the initial drafting of the CIB establishment plan. Identify several locations for contingency purposes and make sure they are dispersed throughout the command. When you are identifying prospective sites, remember that the CIB could be in operation 24 hours a day for several days, depending on the severity of the event.

During exercises, consider locating your CIB away from tall buildings and radio or microwaves so the media can set up satellite dishes. (Avoid direct satellite transmission in wartime situations. The direct transmission of information without the PAO screening it could compromise operational security. Additionally, aircraft carriers and SSBNs can play havoc with commercial media transmissions.)

ACCESS TO SERVICES.— Take a look at billeting, messing, equipment and communications needs when selecting a facility. Plan your CIB so it is accessible to the media. The CIB could be in a hotel, motel, club, recreation center or even a Quonset hut, as long as it provides room for the following:

- Separate work areas for public affairs personnel and media members

- Briefing area large enough for briefers to be seen and heard
- Power sources for electronic news media
- Separate rooms for private interviews
- Adequate work space away from classified areas
- Adequate power supply to handle electronic news gathering equipment
- Public address system
- Public affairs staff telephones

CIVILIAN WORK SPACE.— Plan to separate the public affairs work area from the civilian media work area. Except when on official business, CIB personnel should stay out of the media work area to maintain privacy. Conversely, media members should understand that the public affairs office areas are open only to command personnel.

Coordinate the installation of pay or charge telephones with the command and the local telephone company if they are not already on location. Make sure there is electricity to run media equipment. Provide a light-tight room with running water for them to use as a darkroom. Plan for a briefing room that includes a map of the exercise or incident area and update the map at least daily. Include space for a common area and a lounge, and locate a bulletin board for messages near the lounge.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS WORK SPACE.— Within the public affairs work space of the CIB, plan areas for administrative support, public information and command information. Include a supply closet that can be secured and a darkroom for PAO use. Figure 3-1 is a diagram of a CIB layout.

MEDIA EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS.— In a wartime situation, the amount of public affairs equipment available is limited by vehicle assets. Therefore, when searching for a CIB location, make sure the following equipment is available at the site:

- Desks or tables
- Chairs
- Trash cans
- Ash trays
- Adequate lighting
- Adequate heating or cooling, as required

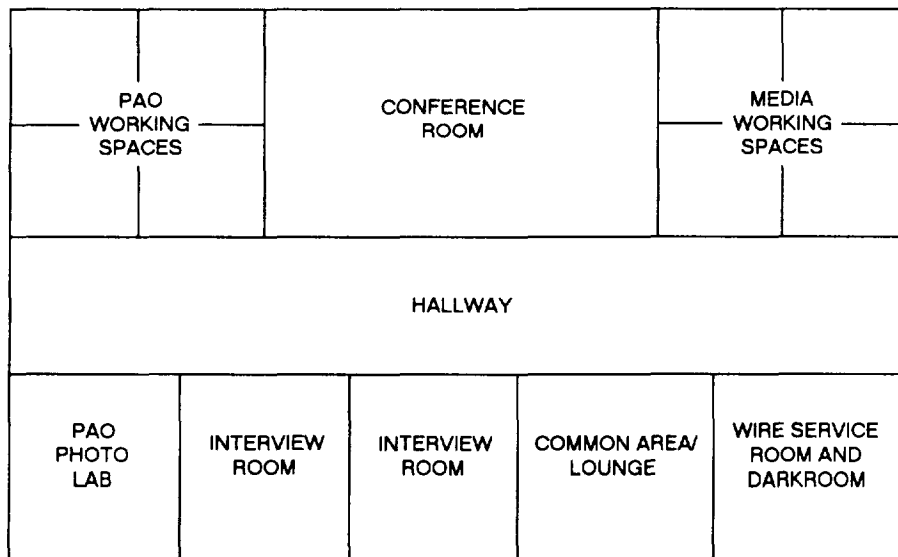


Figure 3-1.—CIB layout.

- Accurate clock with a sweep second-hand
- Telephones
- Electric power

During peacetime exercises you can provide typewriters and word processing equipment for the media. However, do not feel this is a requirement because most reporters will bring their own, probably portable laptop computers with built-in modems. You should not need to provide cameras or ENG equipment to the media.

COMMAND INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS.— You also must consider what equipment you need to support your command information mission.

Every minute counts during CIB operations (especially during an accident or incident), so you must have the needed tools on hand to operate the CIB effectively.

In Chapter 2, Lt. Cmdr. Tull referred to the PAO emergency “fly-away” box, also known as “go” or “crash” kits. Regardless of the name, they amount to the same thing—prepackaged, always-at-the-ready supplies and equipment that can be taken to the CIB at a moment’s notice. Several items are too large or cumbersome to keep physically, but you must know how and where to get them on short notice.

Consider the following items for inclusion in your crash kit:

- **Facsimile machine.** You use this vital machine every day and so does the media. Battery powered facsimile machines (ones that work with cellular telephones) are available.
- **Copier.** A high-speed duplicator with a stapler and sorter is a good choice for sustained operations with extensive media interest.
- **Portable generator.** If nobody else can give you power, you can produce it yourself. If your budget will not allow you to purchase a generator, determine who already has one and who will bring it when you need it.
- **Computer and associated equipment.** Invaluable for preparing releases and for handling a myriad of administrative tasks.
- **Cellular telephones.** Do not count on them following a major disaster (overloaded or down telephone lines due to the disaster) or in rural areas. Otherwise, when conditions are right, cellular telephones are indispensable. (Cellulars cannot be used for classified or sensitive information.)
- **Battery operated portable radio/television.** Both are indispensable for monitoring radio and television broadcasts on the event.

Remember that “no-tech” items are as important as “high-tech” items! Electronic equipment will eventually fail—it is just a matter of when and where. You can cover yourself by stocking the following “no-tech” items in your crash kit:

- Manual impact key typewriter
- Carbon paper
- Paper
- Pens
- Pencils
- Chalk
- Felt marking pens
- Staplers
- Masking tape
- Other basic office supplies
- Power cords
- Batteries
- Post-It notes
- Video and audio tape cassettes (all formats)

Other useful crash kit elements include the following:

- Large maps of the base or command area for posting in the media working spaces
- Small maps for handouts to the media
- Large blank poster boards or prepared signs to identify spaces, automobiles, and so forth
- A small functional library containing useful books, such as the various applicable Navy annuals, *Jane's Fighting Ships* and a current world almanac
- Arm-bands or large identification tags for public affairs staff personnel
- Detailed floor plans or ship's blueprints to be used in media briefing sessions

Media Needs

Detail the methods in which you will help the media in your CIB establishment plan. There are several media concerns you should address, including, but not limited

to the following: military transportation support, communications, messing, billeting, medical care and amenities.

MILITARY TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT.—

While you decide what equipment you must bring to accomplish the mission of the CIB, you must also plan on how to transport it. Vehicles used must meet the requirements of the local roads and field terrain and be able to transport heavy, bulky equipment. Additionally, operations may require the transfer of media equipment to a tactical vehicle for transport to the field, further increasing the need to make intelligent decisions on your transportation resources.

Military ground and air transportation may be required to take media members to areas where the terrain is too rough for their own vehicles. Some incidents, such as an airplane crash, might occur in areas far from the headquarters of the command.

Military transportation support cannot compete with available commercial transportation. For example, when units are deploying from CONUS to overseas exercises or operations, military transportation cannot be provided when commercial transportation is available. The exception to this is when the deployment itself is an essential element in the reporters' coverage of the exercise.

Free transportation from the CIB to military units is authorized while military transportation is available. Avoid authorizing casual, unofficial (personal) use of military transportation.

COMMUNICATIONS.— You can meet the communications needs of news media aboard ship with the use of the ship's communications system. Coordination with the communications officer is essential. You and the PAO must plan for reviewing reporters' stories to make sure there is no adverse impact on operations, security or safety of the unit. After your review, the CO or his specially appointed representative (usually the communications officer or security officer) will review the stories and approve them for transmission.

Reporters may be hesitant to submit their stories for review. However, you must reassure them that the reviews are strictly for security reasons and not censorship. If a story contains classified information, politely ask the reporter to remove it. If the reporter refuses to edit out the classified or sensitive portions, send the story as a classified message to the proper fleet commander in chief (with an information copy to CHINFO) for a ruling. *PA Regs*, Chapter 3, and the *Navy Communications Manual*, NTP-9, provide further

information about the use of Navy communications facilities by the media.

Telephones are essential for most news media ashore. Pay telephones are ideal for the CIB, or you may plan to set up special or credit card telephones. (The business office of the local telephone company will usually do this for free.)

Other communications needs may include duplicating services, the installation of wire service (AP, UPI) and photo lab services. If authorized, the cost of chemicals and operator time may be reimbursable.

MESSING.— Media members should get their food from civilian sources, such as restaurants and grocery stores. If it is more advantageous for the Navy to provide messing facilities at the CIB or to allow access to messing facilities near the CIB, reimbursement may be required. Consult the supply officer for guidance in this matter.

When reporters are escorted from the CIB to ships or units in the field, especially on one-day trips, MREs (meals ready to eat) should be issued at the CIB before departure. The unit hosting the media is not required to provide meals, although it may do so. Individual reporters who stay with a Navy unit may receive messing support from the unit as long as it does not place an unacceptable burden on the unit. Meals received in such instances may or may not be reimbursable, depending on unified command guidelines.

BILLETING.— When civilian berthing is available, media members are **not** authorized the use of military billeting (except for DoD media pool members, who are billeted with U.S. forces). Sometimes, reporters are billeted with U.S. forces when it is clearly in the best interest of the U.S. government.

When civilian billeting is not available and billeting is provided in facilities owned or operated by U.S. forces (to include “tent cities”), reimbursement may be required as directed by the unified command. If media members accompany military personnel in field locations and civilian billeting is unavailable (or not advantageous to the military), news media may be invited to use the same shelter as provided to the personnel of the unit. Reimbursement in this case is not required.

MEDICAL CARE.— Media members will receive care from military medical personnel and facilities when civilian medical care is nonexistent or inadequate. Reimbursement is not required for sick call care.

Report serious injury or illness requiring major medical care to the officer in charge of the CIB. Report the treatment through command channels to the reporter’s sponsoring news organization. Unified command PAOs will decide on reimbursement after consulting with medical personnel and judge advocate general (JAG).

If the reporter must be evacuated from the theater of operations, let the sponsoring news organization know through command channels. The sponsoring news organization, not the DoD or Navy, is responsible for notifying next of kin and releasing the names of reporters who are seriously ill, wounded or killed.

AMENITIES.— Among the amenities normally provided to news media are those that contribute to their health and welfare. To accommodate individual needs and lessen personal discomfort, put together CIB media information packets that contain the following items:

- Diagram and complete description of the CIB, including operating rules
- Important telephone numbers
- Living or working conditions
- Availability and location of housing and meals
- Important places in the area, installation or ship in map or diagram form
- Command mission and policy statements (ground rules)
- Off-limits areas
- Rights and privileges of civilians in a military environment

The CIB may provide coffee, tea and food to reporters on a reimbursable basis. If exchange facilities are available, reporters may be granted access if the exchange can provide enough supplies for military personnel first.

Media Pooling

Make plans for establishing a media pool. A media pool should be formed when many media members are at the CIB and cannot be transported to the event site because of limited transportation, space or equipment. You and the PAO must keep the reporters aware of any limitations so they may decide among themselves who should go and who should stay behind. The media pool should be bound by professional ethics to share information with the reporters who stayed behind.

The following media pool representation provides the best coverage for an event:

- A photographer from either AP or UPI and one reporter from each (top priority)
- At least two television representatives (one correspondent, one camera or audio technician)
- A reporter and a color photographer from the news magazines
- At least one reporter from the daily newspapers
- A radio representative

Representatives from other press associations, radio and television networks and newspapers also could be included if there is room. Keep out of the decisions of who goes and who stays and avoid challenges of favoritism.

Media Ground Rules

Media members must be given written policy statements that spell out the ground rules concerning their activities, their rights and privileges and items of local interest. You may want to incorporate the following ground rules:

- Media may be authorized to sit in on press briefings, travel in military vehicles, use communications, messing facilities, billeting and medical facilities and to be brought in close to sites for photographs or interviews that would otherwise be denied.
- Media must stay with their escorts when it is required, obey security restrictions (describe what might happen if they include sensitive material in their reports) and follow established ground rules. You must tell the media that they will lose all access to information from public affairs official sources if violations occur.

CREDENTIALING

Learning Objective: *Outline the procedures for credentialing members of the media at the CIB.*

Part of your overall CIB organization should include a credentialing process for the media. Credentialing allows you to keep track of the reporters at the CIB and the area of operation. You also can use information obtained from the credentialing process to brief the CO and include in your after-action report.

IDENTIFICATION VERIFICATION

When reporters are escorted from the front gate to the CIB, ask them for some type of identification. This includes press cards, introduction letters signed by the editor on letterhead stationery, or in the case of free-lance reporters, letters of agreement with an established news organization. You can also check their passports, visas or shot records.

Issue credentials only to bona fide news correspondents. Randomly contact the news organization the reporter says he works for to verify his employment. Sometimes, a news organization will say it has never heard of the person whose identification you hold in your hand. You can be quite certain this person is not a true member of the media. They may be spies or nosy locals wanting to know what is going on. Whatever the circumstance, people pretending to be reporters should **not** get the same access to information as reporters with credentials. When verification uncovers fraudulent or expired credentials or letters of agreement, revoke the credentials (if they have already been issued) and contact security personnel immediately.

REGISTRATION

Register the media members by recording their names, telephone numbers of where they work or are billeted and the address and telephone number of their news organization. The reporters must also complete three forms dealing with ground rules, a waiver agreement and a statement of charges.

- **Ground rules.** The ground rules form is just that—a statement that they have read the ground rules of the CIB. Reporters who desire credentials will sign the form as an agreement to follow these rules.
- **Waiver agreement.** This is a form you should prepare with the help of the legal office. It states that they, and their survivors, will hold the U.S. government harmless if they are injured or die as a result of covering military action.
- **Statement of charges.** The statement of charges (also called a letter of credit) lists the reimbursable services they may use.

BADGE ISSUANCE

Issue each reporter a badge or card and identification tag. The badges are a controlled item. The reporters must agree to keep them in their possession as

long as they are in the theater of operations and to return them when they leave. The badges must contain a statement that they are the property of the U.S. government and that the holder will turn in the badge and identification tags if ordered to do so by public affairs personnel. Normally, only the issuing CIB will revoke badges and identification tags for cause. Make sure base security personnel know what the badges look like. In some situations, provide the credentials at an off-base location.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Periodically credentials should be reviewed, revalidated or withdrawn. Credentials should only be withdrawn following a change in the reporter's status, upon request by the sponsoring news organization, or for cause when ground rules have been violated. Commanders should report violations of ground rules or any action that threatens operational security through command channels to the credentialing PAO for appropriate action.

DISSEMINATING NEWS

Learning Objective: *Identify the methods used in disseminating news to the media.*

The CIB establishment plan will not be complete without a section on how you will disseminate news to the media. No matter how simple or elaborate your plans may be, the key to success in this area is remaining flexible, especially when plans go awry.

Certain actions help provide the news media with the best information in the shortest time. This is the very heart of a CIB and close attention should be paid to the following activities: news briefings and conferences, interviews, news releases, background information, bulletin boards, photo boards and audiovisual equipment and materials.

NEWS BRIEFINGS AND CONFERENCES

Media members must be informed of the time and location of news briefings, usually held twice daily for update briefings. News briefings are used to update reporters on the situation, to announce the availability of escorted transportation and to answer or take news media queries. Daily briefings may be held in the morning and evening. Briefers are normally PAOs, but you may be tasked to conduct one.

Special news briefings may be held whenever news interest is so great on a single action or activity that a

briefing becomes the most efficient means of handling media members. For instance, if a helicopter crashes in isolated terrain during an exercise, a special briefing can be held to inform the media of the accident, to organize a media pool to fly to the accident site or to release information as it becomes available.

A news conference is a type of news briefing irregularly held. It is characterized by the attendance of the CO or other military experts who will issue a statement and provide answers to news media queries. Usually, such conferences are centered on a specific topic, although the media may (and probably will) ask questions on unrelated material. Make every effort to inform media members of upcoming news conferences, and they should be given adequate time to arrive for the briefing.

Under extraordinary circumstances the CO and the PAO may choose to brief participating reporters about future operations. Such background briefings are conducted with the agreement that information will not be reported until no harm could come from its public release. Background briefings are risky. Do not give background briefings unless a high degree of mutual trust and respect exist between the Navy and the reporters involved. Violation of such trust is grounds for immediate withdrawal of accreditation.

INTERVIEWS

Reporters sometimes have specific requirements for information that is best collected through personal, one-on-one interviews. Such interviews should be scheduled as often as possible when requested by news media and when the interviewee agrees. The CIB concentrates many news media in a small area with all working from the same information. Interviews allow different, more complete and more credible reporting opportunities for news media.

When possible, especially when requested by the interviewee, you should record these interviews.

NEWS RELEASES

Military journalists and photographers have story and photo opportunities their civilian peers do not have. Accordingly, the CIB prepares releases when something newsworthy occurs. These releases should only complement the stories being released by the media. Avoid duplicating or competing with the efforts of the news media and releasing hard-sell pitches about the military. Let military actions speak for themselves.

However, do not lose sight of the need to tell the story from the military perspective.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Make available fact sheets and verbal statements to help news media understand equipment, personnel and actions of the command. Unit histories and biographies of key commanders should also be available.

BULLETIN BOARDS

Copies of news and feature stories released by the CIB should be posted on bulletin boards in either the conference room or the media working spaces. Devote one section to recent releases and another to all previous releases. If the number of releases exceeds available bulletin board space, place the oldest releases in a three-ring binder and keep it near the bulletin board. Make at least one copy of each release available to each news person present at the time of release. Maintain extra copies of all releases for use when requested. Number written releases and maintain them in a news release file.

PHOTO BOARDS

Photo boards contain pictures taken by command photographers and include captions. Copies of the prints posted are available to news media at no cost and are standard 5- by 7-inch or 4- by 5-inch formats. As with written releases, number each photo and keep complete documentation in the CIB photo release files.

AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

The CIB normally has suitable audiovisual equipment and materials, preferably in the conference room, so documentation of news conferences and interviews may be obtained. Video and audio recording systems are essential. Additionally, backup units in all tape formats should be available. Where necessary, platforms may be built to accommodate motion picture, videotape recording equipment or an overhead projector

and a slide projector, preferably in the rear of the room. These platforms should be large enough to allow mutual use by CIB personnel and the media photographers.

The following are other audiovisual considerations:

- Is the power source to the CIB sufficient to handle the load required? If central power is disrupted, is there a backup system available to run cameras and other power equipment?
- Is the area provided for briefers and interviewees aesthetically pleasing and neat in appearance? Are colors compatible? Are "busy" backgrounds eliminated? Is lighting adequate? How will the interviewee appear on film or videotape and is this image compatible with the news event itself and the military part in the event?
- Is audiovisual equipment mobile enough to permit command coverage of events outside the CIB?

AFTER-ACTION REPORT

Learning Objective: *Recognize the items included in a CIB after-action report.*

Complete an after-action report once the CIB has ceased operations. Note the problem areas you encountered during the incident or exercise and make recommendations for improvements. You can include an overall view of operations, specific areas of interest, a sequence of events and a list of the media representatives who called or visited the media center.

Use careful analysis and complete objectivity when you sit down and write the CIB after-action report. There is no doubt you noted obvious problem areas almost immediately. What about the areas that worked as advertised, but need the rough edges smoothed? You can draft a comprehensive after-action report by going back to the CIB establishment plan and evaluating it one section at a time. You will have to put some time into writing it, but your efforts will provide you with the feedback required to improve future CIBs.